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Letter dated 7 February 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit hereto the press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation of Rwanda and press release SPKM 07/2003 issued by the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), as evidence additional to our letters of 3 and 4 February 2003 addressed to the President of the Security Council denying the presence of the Rwandan Defence Forces in the Ituri and east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as indicated in the false and unsubstantiated allegations of 31 January by MONUC and the ambassador of the Kinshasa Government to the United Nations.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a Security Council document.

(*Signed*) Augustin **Muvunyi**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

03-24159 (E) 100203 100203

Annex to the letter dated 7 February 2003 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Rwanda to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Cooperation

Press release

Further to the reaction expressed by the Rwandan Government to MONUC following the distribution of its press release SPKM 06/2003 issued on 31 January and reporting movements of Rwandan troops in the east and north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Rwandan Government wishes to inform the public that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the Democratic Republic of the Congo has just issued another press release, SPKM 07/2003 of 6 February.

In that release, the Representative of the Secretary-General states that MONUC observers have sought to verify the facts reported in the most recent press release of 31 January 2003, and the findings are as follows:

The MONUC observers found no presence of Rwandan troops in Ituri or the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

They found Ugandan troops to be present only at Bunia airport;

He also indicates that the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has recognized the presence of officers of the Congolese Armed Forces (FAC) at Beni.

The Government of Rwanda takes this opportunity to reiterate its commitment to full implementation of the Lusaka and Pretoria agreements, and calls on all the other signatory parties to honour the commitments they entered into in the presence of the international community.

It once again requests MONUC to disseminate information that has been well verified in advance, so as to avoid creating tensions prejudicial to the peace efforts in the Great Lakes region.

Done at Kigali on 7 February 2003

(*Signed*) Valens **Munyabagisha**
Ambassador
Secretary-General

Appendix

United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)

Press release SPKM 07/2003

(Kinshasa, 6 February 2003)

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Namanga Ngongi, has concluded his consultations with the Governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Rwanda and the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Goma (RCD/G) following the unconfirmed information on troop movements primarily in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this context, Mr. Ngongi had also sent the commander of the MONUC forces, General Mountago Diallo, to Kigali on 3 February 2003.

The purpose of this step was to dispel the concerns expressed to MONUC by the three States concerned, and above all, to prevent a possible resumption of the fighting.

Following these consultations, the responses obtained are as follows:

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo recognizes the presence of FAC officers in Beni in the context of the integration of the forces of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie-Kisangani-mouvement de Libération (RCD/K-ML) into the future Congolese national army;

Ugandan officials denied any deployment of their troops close to the frontier with the Democratic Republic of the Congo north of Mahagi;

The Rwandan authorities reaffirmed that they no longer had troops in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, since the end of their withdrawal last October;

RCD/G announced that it had withdrawn from Luofu, 15 kilometres north-east of Kanyabayonga (North Kivu), and troop movements are no longer being reported around Kanyabayonga.

To date, the MONUC military observers who have conducted verifications in the locations they have been able to visit have not found any presence of Ugandan troops, other than at Bunia airport, or of Rwandan troops in Ituri and the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUC, under its mandate, is continuing verification of the withdrawal of foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The Special Representative welcomes the assurances provided by all parties. Mr. Ngongi also hopes that these statements will contribute to removing the persistent tension in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and urges all parties to continue their efforts within the framework of the peace process.